

61-2694

NPIC/D-102-61  
25 September 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence  
THROUGH: Deputy Director (Intelligence) *raf*  
SUBJECT: National Bureau of Standards Assistance in  
Establishing Photographic Quality Standards

1. In order to evaluate photographic film that we receive and to provide guidance for future collection systems we need to have appropriate methods for measuring photographic quality. This is a very elusive problem for which the scientific community has no standard techniques today. We have endeavored to meet this problem by developing through commercial sources certain instruments to measure quality in technical terms of resolution, acutance and granularity. This equipment is nearing completion. In its final stages we need technical advice from the National Bureau of Standards both to assist us and so that our results will be useful throughout the scientific community.

2. Our attempts to obtain assistance at a lower level have not been very successful. Therefore we would like to send a letter to the Bureau of Standards over your signature in an effort to expedite their help. A proposed letter for this purpose is attached for your concurrence and signature.



A. C. LUNDAHL  
Director

National Photographic Interpretation Center

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Attachment:  
Draft letter

61-7694/a

14 OCT 1961

Honorable A. V. Astin  
Director, National Bureau  
of Standards  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Astin:

It is essential for certain activities of the Central Intelligence Agency that we establish procedures and techniques for measuring the quality of finished photography. The procedures we use should of course be compatible and acceptable throughout the entire scientific community, otherwise practical benefits that will derive therefrom will be limited.

We have under development from a commercial source certain equipment which is intended to measure photographic quality in terms of resolution, acutance, and granularity. This equipment is nearing completion and we must soon make basic decisions as to the scalar values to be recorded on these instruments. Since this problem is one of considerable interest to the scientific community we would like to obtain the benefit of guidance and assistance from the National Bureau of Standards in establishing appropriate qualitative and quantitative values for output readings on this equipment. Technical details and additional information can be obtained from Mr. A. C. Lundahl, Director, NPIC, telephone number [redacted]

I would greatly appreciate early assistance from your organization on this matter as we urgently need to develop appropriate capabilities in this field.

Sincerely,

Allen W. Dulles  
Director

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Approved For Release 2003/10/07 : CIA-RDP80B01676R003500010007-8

Deputy Director (Intelligence)

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